

# Admissions, Retention and Financial Aid Committee (ARFAC)

Meeting of 16 October 2003

Present: Laurel Carrington, Paul Jackson, Kurt Anderson, Jeff McLaughlin, Barb Lundberg, Rachel Erickson (student)

1. Admissions representatives briefed the committee about the Board's responses to accelerating the timetable for implementing 'Need Sensitive' admissions practices to the current admissions cycle. In light of future budget projections, the move toward 'Need Sensitive' could assist the college in financial ways. It will not solve the budget issues, but could help be part of the solution. The Board discussed the following topics related to accelerating the timetable for 'Need Sensitive' admission:

- a. Implementation strategies and protocols
- b. Need for clearly communicating policy change to students and families
- c. Process and activities for getting support for change from campus community
- d. Projected outcomes due to shift in policy ? specifically of interest were gender gaps and increasing diversity

## Important points:

- Why not move ahead as long as the college can meet full-demonstrated need of admitted students?
- In the face of escalating college contributions to financial aid, the 'Need Sensitive' policy will allow the financial aid budget to be more limited in growth and easier to predict.
- Admissions will continue to execute its current plan, because it is sound and it can easily dovetail with the implementation of 'Need Sensitive' Strategies

## Current Implementation Strategy:

- Read 100% of applications
- Make 1<sup>st</sup> set of decisions based on ranking scales (academics and co-curricular/community)
- Fill 85% of spaces without considering need
- Fill remaining 15% of spaces by adding 'Need' as one of the factors of those still qualifying as 'Admissible'. Each case is considered individually on its merits. A significant number of students in this pool will be admitted even if they have high levels of need just because of what they bring to the community.
- If spaces still remain, apply the last 15% strategy to the Wait List to continue filling spaces.

## Challenges:

To be effective, the last two bullet points in this strategy require a large applicant pool. Ensuring process is equitable to all students as need gets factored into the equation (note: need becomes 1 factor of the many factors considered)

Barb is happy to field questions from faculty. She will be going to the student body to share this information very soon.

2. Question coming before the Board in the near future will deal with financial aid. How long will STO be able to guarantee meeting the full demonstrated need of admitted students?

- STO is the only ELCA college that guarantees meeting full demonstrated needs of its admitted students.
- STO is one of 2 Minnesota institutions still guaranteeing meeting full demonstrated need.

3. The registrar's office has asked ARFAC to talk about AP (Advanced Placement) and PSEO (Post-secondary Education Opportunity) policies. Specifically, can it provide any guidance about how to deal with the following situation?

*A student has AP or PSEO credits for a course, but takes a STO placement exam and scores at a level that suggests s/he retake that same course at STO.*

## Possible Options

- Place student into the higher level course regardless of placement exam
- Award credit for another course, but place him/her into the lower level course
- Do not award credit, but place him/her into the lower level course

## Considerations

- Consider what courses transfer in parallel.
- Consider impact on institutional relationships (are we saying that we will not accept transfer credits from Community College, other Liberal Arts Institutions or Universities)
- Find out how many students this involves (3-4/year or 30-50/year?)
- Most of issue may be from language courses. The GE language requirement is pretty intense here compared to other institutions; this might be a good topic for GEC to review and engage others in wider conversation.

4. Draft of Financial Aid policy for New Students will be presented at the next ARFAC meeting. The policy goal is to get students and families to submit all paperwork by the established deadlines.

5. Next Meeting. Thursday, November 13, 2003. Time: 9:30 AM Location: TBD

Respectfully submitted,  
Paul Jackson